The project which Post has written is praiseworthy in spite of these concerns. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a more systematic and sensitive effort to support "more lasting unions" and the "intact," biologically related family than the one Stephen Post has created. For that, we are in his debt.
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HERVIEU-LÉGER, DANIÈLE. *Religion as a Chain of Memory.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000. x+204 pp. $52.00 (cloth).

On the background of the many failed diagnoses of secularization and the "resacralization" of religion, Danièle Hervieu-Léger's highly praised book dares to attempt a new definition of religion. In the tradition of authors such as Peter Berger, Francois-André Isambert, and particularly Thomas Luckmann, she holds that such a definition should not be limited to recognized religion but also include more "invisible forms." In order to avoid the inflation of analogical interpretations of phenomena as religious, she links the notion of religion to the category of believing. Religion is a form of believing that is committed to a chain of belief. In believing, the individual becomes a member of a community and its tradition. Religion, then, includes three elements: the expression of believing, the memory of continuity, and the legitimizing reference to an authorized version of such memory (a notion that is borrowed from Maurice Halbwachs).

By means of this notion of religion, Hervieu-Léger wants to address particularly the historical transformations of religions in modernity. In her view, modernity and religion are not at all categorically exclusive. In fact, it is modernity itself that demands imagined references to tradition and thereby shapes modern expressions of the need to believe. This results from the fact that modern societies are societies of change cherishing "cultures of the ephemeral." The driving force of capitalist societies, change, leads to a disintegration of the *mémoire collective.* This disintegration, however, cannot necessarily be equated with the loss of belief. To the contrary, modern religious movements succeed in reinventing traditions of various forms. The collapse of traditional primary groups (used to carry the collective memory) may be compensated for by the development of "elective fraternities," collectives, networks, and associations. New chains of belief may be reinvented, as can be seen with respect to the emblematization of religious signs in ethnic conflicts. Ethnic identities are thus being "re-charged" in a religious way and highly emotional way. Elective fraternities are founded on the act of choice and depend on the strength of emotional ties. It is this emotionality Hervieu-Léger stresses again and again. But the current upheaval of religious emotion should not be mistaken as the final triumph of religion over reason. Emotional experiences of the sacred are, rather, completing the withdrawal of religion. To be true, in traditional societies religion is always linked to the sacred. In modern fragmented societies, however, religion should be distinguished from the sacred. Whereas religion is based in tradition, contemporary forms of the religious are continually deinstitutionalized. Therefore, "the rise of the religious does not necessarily give rise to religion" (p. 166).

In general, the book is characterized by a determined theoretical stance. Therefore, it does not present the mounting empirical evidence on the demise of secularization or the peculiarities of the European situation (which has been the topic of one of Hervieu-Léger's recent French publications). And despite the fact that it consists in large parts of summaries of other authors' texts, it is undeniably

intriguing. This holds particularly for those parts of the book in which she reconstructs her own investigations, such as her analyses of sport and of modern utopian communities. Nevertheless, one should make a few critical remarks. Thus, it is not true at all that Halbwachs's writing is little known outside of France (as Grace Davie suggests in her foreword). In fact, in the last decade we have witnessed a lively international and interdisciplinary debate on various forms of collective, communicative, and connective forms of memory or "remembering" that often draws on Halbwachs. This debate, however, is not mirrored at all in this book. Moreover, some of the analyses remind one of current theories of late modernity. Despite the fact that these theories are briefly touched on, the relation between the notion of "detraditionalization," religion, and memory is not even mentioned. Finally, one might want to ask if it does really suffice to define religion as a way of believing based on tradition. Considering the harsh criticism experienced by Luckmann's broad notion of religion (which he has since narrowed), one might object that this is still too broad a notion. Nevertheless, by attempting to define and refine the notion of religion, Hervieu-Léger may be truly preparing the ground—if not for the discovery of new religious forms, then for the renewal of the sociology of religion as a discipline that tries to account for the transformation of religion in modernity.

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